

MSWD

MISSION SPRINGS
WATER DISTRICT



IS SEEKING A

GENERAL MANAGER

UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

The Mission Springs Water District is seeking to replace Refugio (Joe) Bocanegra, who is retiring after six successful years at the District. The position offers a unique opportunity to lead an established, resourceful public water agency located in Desert Hot Springs, California.

THE REGION

Desert Hot Springs, a resort city in the Coachella Valley, is a growing community of 16,580 and is the only incorporated city in the Mission Springs Water District's service area. At an elevation of 1,185 feet, Desert Hot Springs is minutes from Palm Springs and is nestled in the foothills of the Little San Bernardino Mountains. The region boasts an arid climate with over 330 days of sunshine per year. Desert Hot Springs is about a two-hour drive from both Los Angeles and San Diego, and is on the direct route from Los Angeles to Phoenix. Palm Springs International Airport offers connections to all parts of the world.

Area attractions include Joshua Tree National Park, five-star restaurants and hotels, and resort spas offering an incredible variety of massages and treatments. Desert Hot Springs sits over one of the world's finest natural hot mineral water aquifers. It is home to two world-renowned spas, Two Bunch Palms Resort and Spa, and We Care Health Center and Retreat, which boast Hollywood celebrities among their regular clientele. The region is also a golfer's paradise, featuring over 100 golf courses within a short "drive". Other recreational activities include hiking, tennis, shuffleboard, shopping, sightseeing, bicycle riding, ballooning, and horseback riding. Casinos, museums and the McCallum Theatre are also nearby.



The Coachella Valley offers outstanding educational opportunities. Cal State San Bernardino and UC Riverside both have satellite campuses in the area and College of the Desert is the local community college. Desert Hot Springs is within the Palm Springs Unified School District.

THE DISTRICT

The Mission Springs Water District (MSWD), located in the City of Desert Hot Springs, California, is seeking a progressive leader to serve as General Manager.

Established in 1953 with a service area of one square-mile, the Mission Springs Water District has grown to its current

size covering 135 square miles providing water service to the communities of Desert Hot Springs, North Palm Springs, West Garnet, West Palm Springs Village, Palm Springs Crest, a small non-residential portion of Palm Springs and other unincorporated areas of



Riverside County. MSWD serves a rapidly increasing population of 27,000 with approximately 10,000 water service connections to 8,650 households and 450 businesses. These accounts presently use about 8,400 acre-feet of water annually. The principal sources of water are the Mission Creek Groundwater Sub-basin and the Cabazon Groundwater Basin.

MSWD owns and operates one million feet of pipeline, 11 water wells and 19 reservoirs.

The District also provides sewer service to approximately 41% of its water customers. Two wastewater treatment plants process sewage from approximately 4,000 connections. The larger of the two plants is capable of handling up to two million gallons daily.

Mission Springs Water District is proud of its award winning water that has been internationally recognized for its outstanding taste. MSWD water has been a consistent Top 10 finisher at the Berkeley Springs International Water Tasting competition, including one bronze medal, two silver medals and two gold medals (1999, 2004) over the past eight years.

The District is governed by a five-member Board of Directors who are elected by residents of the District's service area. The Board appoints the General Manager. The Board meets once a month for regular meetings and once a month for study sessions. The Board also holds periodic workshops.

The General Manager oversees an organization of 46 employees, a FY 2004-05 \$6.1 million operating budget, and a \$25.8 million capital budget. The General Manager directly supervises a senior staff consisting of: Director of Operations and Maintenance, Director of Finance, District Engineer, Wastewater Treatment Project Administrator, Water Resources Project Administrator, Management Services Administrator, Human Resources Officer, Associate Engineer, and Executive Assistant.

THE POSITION

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the General Manager is responsible for implementing Board policies and programs. The GM is the District's chief executive officer and, as such, is responsible for such things as:

- Providing the Board with options and recommendations for strategic initiatives and policy considerations,
- Overseeing and mentoring staff,
- Representing the District in dealings with other public agencies, regulatory bodies, contractors, consultants, and civic organizations. This includes performing a wide range of public relations duties,
- Administering capital improvement projects including engineering design, and property acquisition negotiations,
- Budget development and oversight,
- Reviewing and analyzing potential water needs and available water supplies, and
- Staying abreast of technology related to water and wastewater systems.

CURRENT ISSUES AND PRIORITIES

Current issues and priorities the General Manager will need to address include:

Growth – Desert Hot Springs has experienced very significant growth, with a 40% population increase in the city since 1990. This fiscal year, 1400 new water service connections are projected. Given this population boom, the District is busy keeping up with demands for new water service, while also seeking new, reliable water sources.

Master Plan – A new long-term water master plan will need to address more stringent conservation requirements. The new General Manager will play a key role in helping to develop the plan in order to achieve a balance between the growing demand for water and water conservation practices.



Community Relations – MSWD enjoys a fine community reputation. Rates have been kept at a reasonable level and the

MISSION SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT MISSION

"To provide, protect, preserve our most valuable resource...water."

District has just implemented a five-year rate plan. The District has earned international honors for the quality of its groundwater. It will be a priority for the new General Manager to help the District maintain this excellent public image through education and awareness.

Capital Program – MSWD has made substantial financial investments to ensure the reliability, security and health of its water supply. In June 2004, Sewer Assessment District 12 for approximately \$30 million, passed by a vote of 74%. The AD12 project is for the sewer construction and septic system abatement for approximately 7,000 properties at an estimated cost of \$52 million.

Organizational Leadership – The District has an experienced and talented staff, with low employee turnover and sees itself as being a progressive organization. The General Manager will be expected to lead and mentor District staff and foster an environment of open communication, while "keeping the ball rolling" as the District moves forward with excitement and enthusiasm.

IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate will be an experienced utility administrator, water professional or municipal manager with demonstrated management abilities and significant knowledge of water and wastewater systems, along with an understanding of state regulations. The GM must be an energetic, personable, and innovative leader with excellent communication, problem solving, and consensus building skills.

Specific qualifications are as follows:

Education and Experience

A Bachelor's degree in business administration, public administration, engineering or highly related field is expected, along with significant administrative experience in an agency engaged in providing water and wastewater services.

Competencies and Personal Characteristics

In addition to the experience and education requirements that are outlined above, the MSWD Board and senior staff have identified the following additional traits and competencies that the ideal candidate will possess:



- Experienced water professional with an understanding of technical issues,
- Knowledge of engineering as it relates to water and wastewater systems,
- Politically astute without being political and able to work effectively with the Board and community stakeholders,
- A good leader and motivator who knows how to delegate and who fosters a system of accountability at all levels,
- Desire and ability to “hit the ground running”,
- Strategic orientation; high level of integrity and credibility,
- A strong leader able to take the District to the next level,
- Proven track record in making decisions related to a growing service area,
- Financially astute and resourceful in developing funding sources,
- Respects the role of the Board of Directors and has the ability to create and foster constructive board-staff relations,
- Effective in representing the District with customers, community groups, support organizations and other governmental agencies to further District objectives,
- Ability to inspire support for District policies,
- Customer service oriented with a passion for efficient service delivery,
- An effective listener, communicator, negotiator and teambuilder who is open to new ideas and is accessible,
- Calm under pressure and maintains a good sense of humor.



COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The salary for the General Manager is open and negotiable based on the qualifications of the successful candidate. The District offers a comprehensive benefit package, including:

PERS retirement (2% at 55 plan). A voluntary deferred compensation plan is available. The District also participates in Social Security.

Medical, Dental, Vision Insurance – District currently pays for employee and eligible dependents.

Life Insurance – District-paid \$50,000 policy; supplemental life insurance is available.

Holidays, Vacation and Sick Leave – The District has a generous leave policy.

9/80 work week.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND RECRUITMENT SCHEDULE

To be considered for this position, please submit a cover letter, list of three work-related references (who will **not** be contacted in the early stages of the recruitment), indication of current salary and a resume that reflects the size of staff and budgets you have managed. Your resume should indicate both months **and** years of positions held. For additional information regarding this opportunity, contact David Harris or Stuart Satow at:



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The final filing date for this position is **Friday, November 19, 2004.**

Following the filing date, resumes will be screened in relation to the criteria outlined in this brochure. Candidates with the most relevant qualifications will be given preliminary interviews by the consultants in mid December. The Board of Directors will select a small group of finalists for interviews in late January 2005. An offer of appointment is anticipated in February 2005, following full reference and background checks, and a final interview.